

Senate concurred in that approach to extension of the AMT relief. I think that is an extremely important principle to be established in the Senate.

With regard to the farm bill, there is widespread agreement on both sides of the aisle that we ought to pass a farm bill and we ought to pass it as soon as possible. I think getting the consent agreement to get the amendments down to 20 on each side is a significant step in that direction. I am pleased to hear the majority leader would like for us to stay on that bill, make progress on it, and finish it before Christmas. That is certainly my view as well.

With regard to the Energy bill, we understand there are two highly contentious, well-publicized provisions of tax increases that have been inserted by the House: At a time when oil is close to \$100 a barrel, many of us think a tax increase is not a good idea, and the wind mandate, which is particularly onerous on those of us in the Southeast where there is not much wind, which basically means, in effect, a mandatory rate increase for utilities and for utility ratepayers all across the Southeast. I am hopeful we can get those two items out of that bill.

The President has indicated he will veto the bill, and I think there is a view on the other side of the aisle, as well as on our side, that we would like to have an energy bill actually enacted into law; that is, signed by the President. As the majority leader has indicated, hopefully we can get those problems removed from the Energy bill next week and move toward a Presidential signature.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. REID. If my friend will allow me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this has been cleared by floor staff. The unanimous consent request I just entered needs a clarification. So I ask unanimous consent that it be clarified that nothing else be in order prior to the vote tomorrow morning—no points of order. I think there is a general understanding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The senior Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I just want to say that I have no objection. I wish to comment on the Energy bill. It has been a long time getting here, and it still is not finished. There are provisions of that Energy bill that, if passed, will be superb for the people of this country. It is too bad the bill is laden now with two provisions that we did not have in our bill, that we did not contemplate. We will have to work our way and see what happens. They are serious. They are serious enough to cause the President to veto the bill. I am hopeful we will be able to find our way to get those two provisions out—the

tax provision and the provision with reference to mandatory 15-percent alternative energy fuels in our States. Those two are very difficult. If we keep any of them in, our work is going to be for naught.

So I hope everybody understands the situation. It will be an excellent bill without those provisions, and there may be a few other cleanup provisions we need in the House bill. We will work on them in the next few days.

I thank the leaders.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. What is the floor situation, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore is notified there are no orders in effect.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I speak out of order for no more than 10 minutes.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONONGAH, WEST VIRGINIA, MINE DISASTER

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, as a son of West Virginia's southern coalfields who grew up in a coal miner's home and married a coal miner's daughter, I note that today is the 100th anniversary of the Monongah, WV, mine disaster, a particularly momentous and solemn observance for the coal miners of West Virginia.

The Monongah, WV, mine disaster remains today the worst industrial accident in American history. At least 362 coal miners lost their lives in that explosion on that cold December day, December 6, 1907. The truth is, some of the miners inside Fairmont Coal Company's No. 6 and No. 8 mines were boys—mere children, in fact—whose names did not appear on the company's official ledgers. So we may never know exactly how many lives were lost inside that mine on that dark day.

Sadly, many more miners across West Virginia and the Nation would perish, including another 78 miners in an explosion in that same West Virginia community a little over 60 years later, before Congress would respond with the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969.

Coal miners are a different breed. Coal miners are bound together in ways perhaps not unlike the bonds that develop between soldiers or others whose occupations are inherently dangerous. Coal miners share a vocabulary foreign to most outsiders. Coal miners must place great trust in the persons next to them for their safety. Although mortal danger stalks them daily, in every minute of every day, this mutual trust and mutual dependence creates unusually strong bonds. Coal miners enjoy an unusually deep camaraderie.

Today in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Montana, Virginia, Utah, Alabama, Wyoming, and West Virginia, coal miners are marking the 100th anniversary—that is today—of the Monongah, WV, mine disaster.

They do it with reverence, and they honor their survivors. In West Virginia, we also mark December 6 as Miner Day and celebrate all coal miners—past, present, and future.

Coal remains today, this very moment, the backbone of America's energy supply. Over half of all the electricity we consume every day—and some of it is burning here tonight in the ceiling of this Hall—over half of all the electricity we consume every day is provided by coal miners. We must protect those coal miners. The names Alma, Darby, Crandall Canyon, and Sago remind us that mine disasters are not simply a part of the coal industry's past; they are part of our present.

As we remember the miners who lost their lives at Monongah on that cold December day in 1907, let us also recommit ourselves to protecting the health and the safety of all those men and women who so bravely toil in our coal mines today. May we also take a moment to consider that the current political debate regarding the future of coal—black diamonds—in our national energy policy is taking place under lights—right here, for example—under lights illuminated by the work of coal miners, in the warmth of furnaces fueled by coal miners and completely independent of any foreign sheik or imam, thanks to coal miners—coal miners such as my dad, coal miners such as my wife's father, coal miners such as my brother-in-law. Coal miners, coal miners, coal miners—may God bless them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SNOWSPORTS OUTREACH SOCIETY

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the work of the Snowsports Outreach Society, SOS Outreach, based in Vail, CO, which is dedicated to providing outdoor recreation and confidence-building opportunities to underprivileged youth.

The snow sports industry is an essential part of Colorado's lifestyle, economy, and image. Colorado's mountainous terrain and world-class resorts have set the standard for the ultimate experience in sliding on snow. As a skier, I understand the importance of this outdoor activity—in all its forms—